

CHAPTER 3

SECTION 8.3

TRANSJUGULAR INTRAHEPATIC PORTOSYSTEMIC SHUNT (TIPS)

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I. DESCRIPTION

Transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS) is an invasive radiological procedure performed percutaneously through the jugular vein and involves the creation of an intrahepatic shunt between the hepatic vein and portal vein.

II. POLICY

TIPS is covered for the following indications: **This list is not all inclusive. Those indications for which reliable evidence supports that the procedure is safe, effective and comparable or superior to standard care (proven) are also covered.**

A. Therapy of acute or recurrent esophageal variceal bleeding which is not controlled by or is unresponsive to standard treatment such as endoscopic therapy, pharmacological therapy or surgical shunt.

B. Patients with irreversible hepatic disease who are candidates for liver transplantation and require control of esophageal variceal bleeding.

C. For the treatment of patients with refractory ascites.

III. EXCLUSIONS

TIPS is considered unproven for the following indications and is not covered:

A. As initial therapy for acute or recurrent esophageal variceal bleeding.

B. For the treatment of Budd-Chiari syndrome, hepatorenal syndrome, or gastric variceal bleeding.

C. Preoperative portal decompression to facilitate liver transplantation.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATES

- A. September 29, 1995, for acute or recurrent esophageal varical bleeding.
- B. June 8, 2000, for refractory ascites.

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